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EYEWITNESS TESTIMONY CONCERNING GENERAL HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN EAST TIMOR BY THE INDONESIAN ARMY AFTER DECEMBER 7, 1975

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1. I, Olandino Maia Guterres, 40, born in Bobonaro, East Timor, declare: at the time of the 1974 revolution Portugal offered its colonies liberty to choose their own destiny, and five parties were formed in East Timor--UDT, FRETILIN, APODETI, KOTA and Trabalhista.

I was a sympathiser of UDT because I wanted East Timor to continue as a federal state of Portugal for some years. But political discontent grew and civil war between Timorese resulted; I had to seek refuge in Atambua, Indonesian Timor along with the leaders of UDT and thousands of civilians.

In Atambua, with many others I signed up to re-enter East Timor with Indonesian army (ABRI) troops, seeing that many members of my family remained there. The Indonesians gave us some days of training in Haikesak, and at 5pm on Ocober 15th we left Haikesak to capture the town of Balibo.

There were many of us and the Indonesian soldiers were made up of Group Sussi commanded by Major Andreas, alias Yunus Yosfiah, Indonesia's present Minister for Information, plus two companies of commandos and another two commando (red-beret, RPKD) companies led by battalion commander Ali Mussa, Lieut.Marpaung, commander of Company A, and Lieut. Selamat Kirbiantoro commanding Company B. We were 300 men in all, including the East Timorese.

On the 16th of October at 1am we heard the preliminary attack of the Indonesian forces, with the rising sound of naval bombardment, allowing the Indonesian troops to gain ground. This bombardment lasted about 4 hours.

We arrived at Balibo around 4.30--5am. FRETILIN forces had already abandoned it, but the Indonesians were shooting in all directions, and killed five foreign journalists. I stayed a month more in Balibo.

2. On the 28th November the Indonesians took Atabae; the town had been constantly bombarded by sea and air. Martinho, who had been a captain in the Portuguese Army reserve surrendered with a company of FRETILIN soldiers, together with the population of the hamlets of Fatu-Bui-cari and Aidabalefe and some women from OPMT, the Popular Organization of Timorese Women. These groups were all disarmed and taken off for interrogation, during which almost all of them were tortured with electric shocks, beatings, burnings with cigarettes, and 15 of whom died under interrogation due to the severity of their torture. As well,

women were raped in front of their parents, husbands and children.

3. Some days after the capture of Atabae the Indonesians took Dili, disembarking troops and dropping paratroopers, on the dawn of December 7th, 1975. The attack involved RPKAD commandos, and the following units: Pamungkas, Kopasgat, Battalion 501 of Kostrad and troops from the marine corps-- a total of between 20,000 and 25,000 men. Many of the paratroopers were shot before they reached the ground, some fell in the sea and others were draped over power lines.

I disembarked with two platoons of red berets from the Rajawali group with some Timorese and naval marines at the Comoro river on the morning of December 7th. Through lack of co-ordination some soldiers were shot at by other Indonesian units, as happened at the village of Fatuc-Laran in Atabae. At 9am on the 7th I proceeded from Comoro to find my elder sister, my cousins and uncles, but when I arrived at Dili harbour I saw the Indonesians ordering a file of some dozens of Timorese, including some Chinese, who they were pushing en masse to be executed. They used parachute ropes to tie the bodies together and then threw them into the sea in groups.

In the suburb of Vila Verde a commander of Battalion 501 was killed and the soldiers from this unit dragged out men and their families living in the Social Welfare building and nearby houses and executed them all in reprisal. The women and daughters of these men were raped.

During the attack on Dili there was no distinction between supporters of APODETI, FRETILIN or UDT. It was characterized not only by the indiscriminate crimes of ABRI, but, because they were poorly paid, the Indonesian soldiers used the occasion to loot all they could, carrying air conditioners, refrigerators, electrical goods of all kinds and even communion wine to their warships in Dili harbour.

Leading supporters of FRETILIN who were not executed on the first day and did not succeed in fleeing to the mountains were all captured and held in Dili's Comarca prison or unofficial prisons where they were interrogated under torture.

The most well-known torture centres were in the Marconi building in Dili and in the Chinese-owned Sang Tai Ho building on Colmera. This was the first time we Timorese came to know the practice of torture in such forms as electric shocks, burning the skin with cigarettes, rape of women and other cruel activities.

4. This was the general situation of the Indonesian military presence in Dili. On the 24th December 15 assault cars accompanied by three artillery and cavalry battalions with two commando battalions of the Pamungkas and Rajawali groups commanded by Ali Mussa departed from Dili to Aileu, but soon encountered resistance in Balibar and at the entrance to the Jesuit seminary in Dare where FRETILIN had a company

of men; however the Indonesians called in naval artillery support and FRETILIN subsequently retreated..

It was only on the 25th December that they took Balibar and Alto de Ornai, and even on the afternoon of the 25th many Indonesians were killed, including a sergeant called Teotinus Alves. At 4.am. on the 26th December, 1975 they advanced from Alto de Ornai descending the river of Be-Mos in the direction of Besilau, and on the way two (resistance) militias came to surrender, bringing with them more than 60 people, including three men over 50 and women and children.

Due to their bitterness at the losses they had suffered during the landing in previous days these people were not even questioned but sent into a creek where a grenade was thrown among them and five soldiers were ordered to fire on them with Akai weapons until all were dead. The Indonesian forces pressed on in the direction of Aileu but before they could enter FRETILIN brought down an assault car killing three Indonesian soldiers. after 12 days in A ileu the commandos of Rajawali and Pamungkas and some East Timorese returned to Dili.

5. Early in December 1975 Indonesian soldiers from Battalion RTP7, including many Timorese, took Maubara under cover of artillery bombardment. On the first day at 2pm the town was completely deserted, because the population had fled to the mountains with FRETILIN.

After some hours a Timorese called Manico came to surrender and the Indonesians questioned him about the whereabouts of the population. Manico told them he had been separated from the general population and had been hiding with the Chinese of Maubara in a place a couple of kilometres from the town.

The commander organized for some of his men to return with Manico and call out the Chinese; after some time they came. When they were near the centre of the town they were grouped under a banyan tree and the Indonesian commander then called a Timorese named Chico Soares who spoke Bahasa Indonesian to tell the Chinese that they needed 20 men to go with Manico to Atapupo to fetch rice to feed the women and children. They went off, but when they reached the beachfront close to the Maubara chapel they were divided into two groups--one composed of 14 men and the other of 7. They then opened fire on them and all were executed.

I know the location of the bones of these people, as do certain other people from Liquiça. The wives and daughters of these Chinese were systematically raped by the soldiers of tis same unit.

I myself have been captured four times and tortured on every occasion, with them even tearing out my thumbnail on the left hand. In all these matters I know many other eyewitnesses who live in Timor--in Dili, Atabae, Balibo, Aileu and Bobonaro, as well as widows, brothers and

children of the deceased. These victims are known as 'The Dead Without Cemeteries'.

In conclusion, I am always at your disposal to clarify these matters further.

Olandino Luis Maia Guterres

BOBONARO 1983

By 1983 I was serving as a policeman in the Indonesian police force. On December 9, 1983 FRETILIN forces ambushed an Indonesian position near the river between the villages of Aisaleuk and Mape, killing 7 soldiers from Battalion 612. After their soldiers were buried they then mounted an offensive in the areas between Bobonaro and Ainaro but failed to capture any FRETILIN fighters.

Motivated by resentment over these deaths, a force from Battalion 612, with soldiers from Kormail of Bobonaro commanded by Lieutenant Suripto, a commando veteran, and a section of 14 commandos (RPKD) rounded up and held 94 people from the hamlets of Aisaleuk, Hauba and Lour. They were all executed, among them women and children, and some of the women were raped before being shot. The overall commander of this operation was RPKD Lieut.Nainggolan. I registered a complaint with the International Red Cross in Dili and Bishop Belo, and was subsequently transferred from Bobonaro police section to Baucau section.